

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL ASMARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 117357

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PINS CASC ET

SUBJECT:TENNECO SIX

REFS: (A) KHARTOUM 1257; (B) ADDIS 6334; (C) ASMARA 428;

(D) KHARTOUM 1261

FOR EMBASSY PERSONNEL ONLY

1. WHILE DEPT STILL HOPEFUL THAT POLITICAL DEMANDS CAN BE BYPASSED, IT REALIZES THAT ELF MAY WELL BE ADAMANT IN INSISTING ON OBTAINING WHAT IT MAY REGARD AS SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL BENEFIT BEFORE RELEASING HOSTAGES. DEPT AGREES, THEREFORE, THAT SUBJECT OF PRISONER RELEASE SHOULD BE RAISED WITH IEG AND THAT SCHEDULED MEETING, WITH ACTING MIN-INT (CF. PARA 2 REF B) PRESENTS EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO SOUND OUT IEG RE WILLINGNESS TO EXCHANGE POLITICAL PRISONERS FOR TENNECO CAPTIVES.

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2. WE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, RE TIMING AND CHANNELS FOR CON-

VEYING IEG ATTITUDE ON THIS QUESTION TO ELF. WE TEND BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD NOT BE DESIRABLE FOR TENNECO NEGOTIATORS TO GIVE ANY ASSURANCES IN BEHALF IEG UNLESS AND UNTIL ELF DEMANDS SPECIFIC NUMBER AND/OR NAMES OF PRISONERS TO BE RELEASED. MOREOVER, IEG SHOULD BE FULLY AWARE THAT ITEMS BEING DISCUSSED IN ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN TENNECO AND ELF AND GIVE ITS PRIOR CONSENT TO TENNECO'S INFORMING ELF OF IEG POSITION BEFORE TENNECO NEGOTIATORS TAKE SUCH

ACTION. WOULD APPRECIATE ADDIS' VIEWS ON THESE POINTS.

3. GALBRAITH OF GHINDA HOSPITAL'S HOME MISSIONARY ORGANIZATION REPORTED THAT HE HAD JUST RECEIVED LETTER FROM MINOR IN ASMARA INDICATING THAT GEORGE MIDDLETON OF SUDAN INTERIOR MISSION "KNOWS WHERE MRS. DORTZBACH IS LOCATED". ACCORDING TO MIDDLETON, SHE IS APPROXIMATELY 12 MILES FROM AFABED (WHICH WOULD SEEM TO CONFLICT WITH MOUNTAIN LOCATION DESCRIBED BY WYATT IN REF C). LOCAL CHIEFTAINS REPORTEDLY PRESSING FOR MRS. DORTZBACH'S RELEASE BUT FEARFUL THAT IEG WILL RAZE VILLAGE IN REPRISAL "AS HAS OFTEN OCCURRED IN PAST".

4. BELIEVE ADDIS/ASMARA SHOULD GET WRITTEN ASSURANCE THAT IN ADDITION TO AGREEING NOT TO CHASE ELF CAPTORS (PER PARA 1 REF B), IEG WILL NOT PUNISH VILLAGERS AMIDST WHOM ELF AND HOSTAGES MAY HAVE BEEN LIVING.

5. IF SUCH ASSURANCES RECEIVED FROM IEG, REQUEST CONGEN INFORM MIDDLETON SO THAT HE CAN NOTIFY VILLAGERS TO PRESS ONWARD FOR MRS. DORTZBACH'S RELEASE. KISSINGER

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